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FORESHADOWING THE MONARCHY'S DILEMMA:A RHETORICAL ANALYSIS OF JUDGES 19

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Abstract

The aim of this research is to analyze Judges 19 from a rhetorical perspective, applying the technique of chiastic-topographical structure. The analysis further contends that the toponyms serve a literary-theological function by foreshadowing the monarchy's dilemma. They reveal a positive attitude towards Bethlehem of David and a negative one towards Gibeah of Saul. After employing the literary technique of chiastic-topographical structure, five units emerged: A. vv. 1–2 | Mount of Ephraim; B. vv. 3–10a | Bethlehem of Judah; C. vv. 10b–13 | Jabes; B'. vv. 14–28 | Gibeah; and A'. vv. 29–30 | Mount of Ephraim. The study suggests that the narrator intentionally avoids naming characters, instead emphasizing locations like Mount Ephraim, Bethlehem of Judah, and Gibeah, with a central focus on Jabes-Jerusalem. This arrangement serves to highlight a pro-David and anti-Saul monarchy sentiment.

Keywords: Judges 19, chiastic-topographical structure, rhetorical analysis

Preliminary Remarks

The Book of Judges is divided into three main sections: prologue (Judg 1:1–2:5), center (Judg 2:6–16:31), and the epilogue (Judg 17:1–21:25).[1] The book of Judges contains a plethora of violent literary

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[1] Tremper Longman and Raymond B. Dillard, *An Introduction to the Old Testament*,

depictions. These include instances of political assassination (Judg 9), the killing of enemy combatants (Judg 4–5), war crimes (Judg 9), and human sacrifice (Judg 11).[2] The last section of the book (Judg 17:1–21:25) depicts the decline of Israel. Judges 17–18 highlight the portrayal of the religious decline among the Israelites. Judges 20:1–21:25 depict the decline of social conditions among the Israelites.

Within the narrative, the depiction of violence in Judg 19 reaches its climax. Judges 19 is a self-contained literary unit that includes a variety of violent narrative imagery. These include the Levite's agreement to have the woman thrown out (vv. 23–25a), a case of group rape (vv. 24–25), the Levite's indifference towards the abuse of his own wife (vv. 27–28), as well as instances of murder and post-mortem mutilation (vv. 26–29).[3] Judges 19 is one of the narratives that depicts Israel's challenges in terms of morality, social issues, religion, and politics.

State of Research

Scholars have applied various approaches to Judg 19, with the most common ones focusing on the examination of its narrative structure.[4] Krisel's remarkable study, *Judges 19–21 and the "Othering" of Benjamin*, on Judg 19–21 presents a detailed review of the lit-

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2nd ed. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2006), 138. The analysis conducted in this study was substantially influenced by the research of Daniel Olariu. Daniel Olariu, "Enigma din En-Dor: O abordare retorică a textului din 1 Samuel 28:3–29:1," *Theo-Rhēma* 7.2 (2012): 3–31

[2] Kirsten H. Gardner, "Reading Judges 19. A Study of Narrated Apostasy and Literary Representations of Violence" (PhD diss., Fuller Theological Seminary, 2017), 1.

[3] Brettler labels Judg 19 as a "text of terror." Marc Z. Brettler, *The Book of Judges* (London: Routledge, 2002), 81.

[4] Kotzé Zacharias, "A Re-reading of Judges 19 in Juxtaposition to the Zimbabwean Women's Vulnerability to 'Punitive Rape'," *HTS Theological Studies* 78.2 (2022): 1–7; Chuck Pitts, "Judges 19 as a Paradigm for Understanding and Responding to Human Trafficking," *PP* 37.1 (2023): 5–9; Brandon M. Hurlbert, "Cut and Splice: Reading Judges 19 Cinematically," *BI* 30.2 (2022): 125–49; Alexiana Fry, "Whom Shall I Fear? The Irony of Affective Politics in Judges 19," *JIBS* 5.1 (2023): 1–15.

erature on the structure of Judg 19–21. Krisel concentrated on the works of seven authors who divided Judg 19–21 into multiple parts, so a detailed revision is unnecessary.[5] Instead, the structures proposed by Fokkelman, Yonger, and Dorsey, which include a chiastic structure for Judg 19, are relevant to this study.

Fokkelman says that "[m]y contribution on Judges 19 is mainly a short note on the correct structure of the story."[6] Thus, Fokkelman structures Judg 19 with a particular emphasis on information about time and space, as well as the three journeys in the narrative.[7] He observed a chiasmus in Judg 19. The structure of Judg 19 presents nine scenes, AA' (vv. 1–2 // 29–30), BB' (vv. 3–4 // 27–28), CC' (vv. 5–7 // 22–26), DD' (vv. 8–10 // 15–21), with scene E (vv. 11–14) serving as the central part of the story.[8]

Younger divides his analysis of Judg 19 into three journeys that follow a chiasmus pattern.[9] Younger identified as Fokkelman nine parts: AA' (vv. 1–2 // vv. 29–30), BB' (vv. 3–4 // vv. 27–29), CC' (vv. 5–7 // vv. 22b–26), DD' (vv. 8–10a // vv. 15–22a), and the part E (vv. 10b–14) is "the pivotal point of the story."[10]

In contrast to the more extensive analyses by Fokkelman and Younger, Dorsey provides a concise analysis of Judg 19. Dorsey

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[5] Gray divides Judg 19 as follows: (vv. 1–10a; vv. 10b–21; vv. 22–28; vv. 29–30). Sogin structured Judg 19 as follows: (vv. 1–9; vv. 10–21; 22–28; 29–30). Groß divided Judg 19 as follows: (vv. 1–4; vv. 5–10; vv. 11–15; vv. 16–21; vv. 22–25; vv. 26–28e; vv. 28f–30) and Frolov has the following division: (vv. 1–3a; vv. 3b–8a; vv. 8b–10; vv. 11–16; vv. 17–21; vv. 22–28a; vv. 28b–30. For a detailed analysis, see William Krisel, *Judges 19-21 and the "Othering" of Benjamin* (Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2022), 74–8.

[6] Jan P. Fokkelman, "Structural Remarks on Judges 9 and 19," in *"Sha'arei Talmon": Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon*, ed. Michael Fishbane, Emanuel Tov and Weston W. Fields, trans. Jon P. Fokkelman (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 33–45.

[7] Fokkelman, "Structural Remarks on Judges 9 and 19," 40, 44.

[8] Fokkelman, "Structural Remarks on Judges 9 and 19," 40, 44.

[9] Younger conducted a more comprehensive examination of Judg 19, in contrast to Fokkelman's analysis. K. L. Younger, *Judges and Ruth*, NIV (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan, 2002), 374–5.

[10] Younger, *Judges and Ruth*.

identifies a chiasmus in Judg 19. The structure he has devised consists of seven units: AA′ (vv. 1–2 // vv. 27–30), BB′ (vv. 3–4 // vv. 22–26), CC′ (vv. 5–9 // vv.15–21), with the central part D (vv. 10–14).[11] The table below shows the three scholars' proposed structures for Judg 19.

Fokkelman	**Younger**	**Dorsey**
A (vv. 1–2)	A (vv. 1–2)	A (vv. 1–2)
B (vv. 3–4)	B (vv. 3–4)	B (vv. 3–4)
C (vv. 5–7)	C (vv. 5–7)	C (vv. 5–9)
D (vv. 8–10)	D (vv. 8–10a)	D (vv. 10–13)
E (vv. 11–14)	E (vv. 10b–14)	C′ (vv. 14–21)
D′ (vv. 15–21)	D′ (vv. 15–22a)	B′ (vv. 22–26)
C′ (vv. 22–26)	C′ (vv. 22b–26)	A′ (vv. 27–30)
B′ (vv. 27–28)	B′ (vv. 27–28)	
A′ (vv. 29–30)	A′ (vv. 29–30)	

In summary, the literature review on the structure of Judg 19 underscores specific constraints within the existing scholarly discourse. several deficiencies. Presently, there is no consensus among scholars regarding the structure of Judg 19. Furthermore, the scholars who have conducted an analysis of Judg 19 have structured the chapter with consideration for the three journeys present in the passage, as well as the temporal and spatial signals of the narrative.

While previous studies have analyzed Judg 19 from a literary viewpoint, applying the chiastic technique, this fresh analysis reveals that previous studies overlooked a topographical structure within the narrative. Therefore, this research aims to analyze Judg 19 from a perspective of rhetorical topographical structure, utilizing

[11] David A. Dorsey, *Literary Structure of the Old Testament: A Commentary on Genesis-Malachi* (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker, 2005), 117.

the chiastic-topographical structure technique. The analysis further contends that the toponyms serve a literary-theological function by foreshadowing the monarchy's dilemma. They reveal a positive attitude towards David's Bethlehem and a negative one towards Saul's Gibeah.

Methodology

This study employs a rhetorical approach to analyze the episode in Judg 19 to ascertain its underlying meaning. This rhetorical approach claims possible advantages for literary study. Only three advantages will be recalled.

First, the rhetorical approach emphasizes the significance of the literary structure in interpreting the narrative.[12] Secondly, the story's inner plot holds significant relevance within the context of the rhetorical approach.[13] Thirdly, this approach emphasizes the writing techniques employed by OT authors to craft captivating and compelling narratives.[14] The study will focus on the structure. The study employs the literary technique of *introverted correspondence* to establish the chiastic-topographical structure of Judg 19.[15]

After employing the literary technique of chiastic-topographical structure, five units emerged: A. vv. 1–2 | Mount of Ephraim, B. vv. 3–10a | Bethlehem of Judah, C. vv. 10b–14 | Jabes, B'. vv. 15–28 |

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[12] Olariu, "Enigma din En-Dor," 4–5.

[13] Fokkelman regarding intrinsec study points out: "The aim of the intrinsec study of literature is to understand the text from inside, guided by the obvious and quite natural question: "What do you mean? What are you actually saying?" Fokkelman, *Narrative Art*, 1–2.

[14] Olariu, "Enigma din En-Dor," 4–5; Shimeon Bar-Efrat, "Some Observations on the Analysis of Structure in Biblical Narrative," *VT* 30.2 (1980): 157–73; Joan E. Cook, "Beyond 'Form Criticism and Beyond': James Muilenburg's Influence on a Generation of Biblical Scholars," *Proceedings* 17 (1997): 19–27.

[15] Ethelbert W. Bullinger, *Figures of Speech Used in the Bible: Explained and Illustrated* (London: Messrs Eyre & Spottiswoode, 1898), 374. With regard to the figures of speech, this study will adopt the nomenclature proposed by Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, 363–93.

Gibeah, and A'. vv. 29–30 | Mount of Ephraim.[16] The structural and thematic elements of these units were analyzed. An in-depth comprehension of the narrative is pursued by examining complementary and contrasting structures and themes, as well as analyzing literary techniques employed by the narrator.[17]

An Analysis of the Chiastic-Topographical Structure in Judges 19

The House of Ephraim (A.19:1–2 // A'.19:29–30)

The first chiastic structure pair (AA') to be examined is framed by vv. 1–2 and 29–30. The division of verses in the first scene A is identical to those proposed by Fokkelman, Younger, and Dorsey. In scene A', we divided the verses similarly to Fokkelman and Younger, but differently from Dorsey.

According to Fokkelman, temporal cues are the reason for dividing vv. 1–2 as the first scene. He notes that "[s]egment A poses the problem the plot is going to elaborate. It is framed by a double יָמִים and the mention of four months."[18] Regarding vv. 29–30, Fokkelman fails to clearly articulate his reasons for division. Younger, unlike Fokkelman, is not very clear as to why he decided to categorize vv. 1–2 as the first scene. However, Younger argues that vv. 1–2 constitute scene A because they "presents a 'small separation' namely a familial squabble in which the Levite is separated

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[16] This structural analysis was based on my personal observations in collaboration with those of Fokkelman and Younger. Fokkelman, "Structural Remarks on Judges 9 and 19," 33–45; Younger, *Judges and Ruth*, 374–90.

[17] Furthermore, within the context of this study, it is important to note that the terms "unit" and "scene" are used interchangeably to denote the five units and scenes, specifically ABCB'A'. The term "literary unit" is used to encompass the entirety of the passage found in Judg 19. Jan P. Fokkelman, *Reading Biblical Narrative* (Leiden: Deo, 1999), 161.

[18] Fokkelman, "Structural Remarks on Judges 9 and 19," 41.

from his concubine… ."[19] Younger also uses the same reason for the division of vv. 29–30 as the last scene of the narrative.[20] Dorsey provides no justification for his scenes being divided.[21]

In addition to the arguments made by the scholars mentioned earlier, we consider vv. 1–2 to be a separate unit due to its topographical aspects. The narrator, in vv. 1–2, introduces the region of Mount Ephraim. In vv. 1–2, the narrator also introduces characters like the Levite and his wife. In vv. 29–30, the narrator concludes the narrative with the same location and characters. Thus, we can view vv. 1–2 and 29–30 as parallel units, serving as narrative boundaries that set the story. These verses center on the same main characters, the Levite and his concubine, as well as the same geographical area, Mount Ephraim, in both the beginning and ending of the story.

Analysis of AA′ as distinct units.The writing technique employed in unit A is "introverted correspondences."[22] Unit A, vv. 1–2, follows the following structure:

a₁ v. 1a | There was no king in Israel.

a₂ v. 1b | The Levite וַיִּקַּח "took" a concubine from Bethlehem in Ephraim.

a₃ v. 2a | Problem: "his concubine played the harlot against him"(NASB) | | "his concubine became angry with him" (NETS).

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[19] Younger, *Judges and Ruth*, 376–7.

[20] Younger asserts: "The answer comes quickly and appallingly in Part A′ (vv. 29–30). Immediately after his return home, the Levite—with the same self-centered callousness that had delivered his concubine into the hands of the horde at the door—takes a knife and cuts her up, limb by limb, into twelve parts and sends these into every tribe in Israel (cf. 1 Sam. 11:7). In the beginning of the story, there was a 'small separation,' in that the Levite was separated from his concubine by her going to her father's house. But at the end of the story, there is a 'big separation,' for the Levite is separated from his concubine by cutting her up and sending her parts to the tribes of Israel." Ibid., 382.

[21] Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 117.

[22] Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, 356.

a₂′ v. 2b | The concubine תֵּלֶךְ "went away" from him to her father's house in Bethlehem.

a₁′ v. 2c | The concubine stayed in Bethlehem for four months.

In unit A, the narrator establishes the historical context of this episode by stating, "[n]ow it came about in those days, when there was no king in Israel." (Judg 19:1a NASB). This information helps the reader understand the forthcoming narrative in relation to Israel's lack of a ruler.[23]

The action begins on Mount Ephraim's periphery. Scene A introduces the first two characters. The starting point of the narrative involves the introduction of the central character, the Levite, who plays a significant role in the narrative, as well as his wife. The description of the status of לֵוִי provides the reader with valuable information. The Levites were tasked with the role of serving as spiritual leaders for the Jewish nation.[24] From the outset of the episode, this character has been subject to elevated social, moral, and religious expectations. The narrator's mention of the Levite's temporary residence, גָּר "residing" (v.1 JPS) in Ephraim is significant for the progression of the plot.

Additionally, the narrator offers significant insights into Levite's wife. The woman held the status of a פִּילֶגֶשׁ "concubine," serving as the Levite's second wife. The narrator portrays the woman as having departed from her husband's residence to her father's dwelling in Bethlehem of Judah.[25]

Unit A is structured around the central member a3. The narrator establishes early on that there exists a significant problem between the Levite and his wife. The narrator aims to communicate the presence of a family conflict, which may be caused by infidelity, a

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[23] Ángel M. Rodríguez, ed., *Andrews Bible Commentary: Light. Depth. Truth* (Berrien Springs, MI: Andrews University Press, 2024), 415.

[24] Daniel I. Block, *Judges, Ruth*, NAC 6 (Nashville: Broadman & Holman, 2001), 522.

[25] For further details regarding the characterization of these two characters, see Block, *Judges, Ruth*, 522–3.

quarrel, or other factors.[26] The contrasting nature of members a2 and a2′ is evident. The presence of a2 indicates that the Levite brought his wife from Bethlehem. In member a2′, the Levite's wife leaves the house where she was taken and returns to her father's house in Bethlehem of Judah. The Levite is intrigued by the woman's extended stay of four months at her father's residence (a1′). This is evident in v. 3, where the Levite embarks on a journey to the woman's house. The introduction creates tension in the reader's mind. The reader expects to discover the causes and solutions for these issues.

Unit A′. vv. 29–30, follows the following structure:

a$_1$ v. 29a | "He [the Levite] entered in his house" from Ephraim.

a$_2$ v. 29b | The action of the Levite. The Levite "took a knife," "laid hold of his concubine," "and cut her in twelve pieces…"

a$_1$′ v. 29c | The Levite "sent her throughout the territory of Israel."

a$_2$′ v. 30 | The reaction of the tribes of Israel. "Consider it," "take counsel," and "speak up."

The unit A′ employs a "simple alternation correspondence" writing technique.[27] A′ is the only instance in which the narrator depicts the Levite and his wife as being alone. The Levite's treatment of the woman's body prompted further inquiries regarding his behavior.

Prior to the Levite cutting her off, was the woman deceased? Webb highlights the subsequent noteworthy particulars: "Note, for example, the contrast between [Judg] 5:27, where we are told that Sisera "fell—dead," and 19:26, where we are told only that the con-

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[26] According to Josephus, the woman departed for her father's residence due to her dissatisfaction with the frequent disputes between her and her husband. Robert Jamieson, A.R. Fausset, and David A. Brown *Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments* (New York: Scranton, 1878), 171.

[27] Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, 365.

cubine "fell" at the door of the house."[28] Based on the aforementioned evidence, it can be proposed that the Levite's wife may not have been deceased at the time when the Levite took her. The members a2 and a2′ in A′ may exhibit complementarity. Legally, the act of desacralizing the deceased body was considered immoral.[29] The tribes' astonishment in v. 30 can be attributed to the Levite's brutal method of demonstrating the atrocities committed by the people of Gibeah, as outlined in the structure.

Thematic and linguistics correspondences. From a topographical perspective, it can be observed that A′ occupies the same geographical location as A. The presence of the characters in the two scenes also exhibits a similarity. In the beginning of the story, the narrator introduces the Levite and his wife as being in a state of separation. The episode concludes with a partial reunion between the two characters. In the introduction, the narrator establishes that the Levite has been alone for four months. By the end of the episode, the narrative suggests that the Levite will continue to be without his wife indefinitely.

The importance for interpretation. Unit A develops the narrative plot in Judg 19. This unit introduces the main characters, specifically the Levite and his wife. The verses in A depict the Levite's and his wife's familial conflict. The conflict in unit A justifies the journey from unit B.

Furthermore, within the framework of A, it is possible for members a1 and a1′ to figure out the underlying factors contributing to the woman's prolonged stay in Bethlehem. During that period, there was an absence of a king, and concurrently, the woman was absent for a duration of four months. Perhaps the four-month period demonstrates that since there is no king, no one can do the Levite and his wife justice. A′ confirms the narrator's forecasting made in vv. 1–2 about the absence of fairness. The Levite pursues

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[28] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 453.

[29] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 453.

justice for himself, while his wife is unable to attain it. A′ depicts the tragic death of the Levite's wife by someone entrusted with her protection. The narrator withholds the explanation for the Levite's dismemberment of the woman. Younger suggests that the Levite's purpose in sending the cut-off pieces was to rouse the Israelites from their apathy and motivate them to pursue justice.[30] According to Webb, the woman was executed "only as an object to inspire horror and bend others to his will."[31] Block argues, "[t]he purpose of such actions was clear: to mobilize the troops by creating shock and evoking fear."[32]

We propose that the following factors can account for the dismemberment of the Levite's wife: (a) the narrative in Judg 19 and the subsequent chapter implies that the Levite seeks to unite the people of Israel. In 1 Sam 11:7, Saul, who would later become the king of Israel, seeks to unite the nation for war by performing a ritual involving the slaughter of a pair of oxen. The dismemberment of the woman in the Judg narrative may imply the Levite's desire to assume a position of authority as a judge or king in Israel. (b) The phrase "every man did what was right in his own eyes" (Judg 17:6; 21:25) establishes the backdrop for the Levite's reprehensible behavior. He holds a conviction that his actions are morally correct. The narrator illustrates the extreme consequences of a lack of governance by depicting the Levite cutting the woman into 12 pieces.

Unit A′ is a pivotal part of the narrative in Judg 19, serving as the conclusion of the story and facilitating the transition to the next episode. The events in A′ provide the narrative framework for the subsequent account in Judg 20.

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[30] Younger, *Judges and Ruth*, 381.

[31] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 453.

[32] Block, *Judges, Ruth*, 546.

The House of Bethlehem and the House of Gibeah (B.19:3–10a // B'.19:15–28)

The second chiastic structure pair (BB') to be examined is framed by vv. 3–10a and 15–28. We define the second chiastic pair in a totally different way than Fokkelman, Younger, and Dorsey did. The topographic function serves as the primary justification for this division. Events that take place at Gibeah and Bethlehem are shown in vv. 15–28 and 3–10a, respectively. As a result, there are literary subunits within the two macro scenes that make up the macro division of BB'.

The analysis revealed that it can divide unit B (vv. 3–10a) into three subunits. Thus, unit B has subunits B_1 (vv. 3–4), B_2 (vv. 5–7), and B3 (vv. 8–10a). Unit B' shares the same structure as unit B. Thus, unit B' presents subunits B_1' (vv. 26–28), B2' (vv. 22–25), and B_3' (vv. 15–21), each of which is parallel to B_1, B_2, and B_3. The following section will examine each subunit individually.

Bethlehem // Gibeah (B_1 19:3–4 // B_2' 19:26–28). The chiastic structure pair (B_1B_1') to be examined is framed by vv. 3–4 and 26–28. These B_1B_1' divisions are similar to those proposed by Fokkelman, Younger, and Dorsey.[33]

Analysis of B_1B_1' as distinct subunits. Subunit B_1 exhibits "simple introverted correspondence:"[34]

$b_{1.1}$ v. 3a | The Levite desires to persuade his wife to return to the house of Ephraim. The Levite "arose," and "went after her."

$b_{2.1}$ v. 3b | Hospitality: the woman leads him to her father's home.

$b_{2.1}'$ v. 3c | Hospitality: the women's father warmly welcomes the Levite to his house.

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[33] Fokkelman, "Structural Remarks on Judges 9 and 19," 41; Younger, *Judges and Ruth*, 381; Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 117.

[34] Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, 375.

b$_{1.1}$′ v. 4 | The father-in-law persuades the Levite to remain in Bethlehem for an extended period of three days.

Verses 3–4 form a distinct subunit within the narrative, serving to advance the storyline by prompting the characters' progression within the plot. The narrator clarifies the purpose of the Levite's journey to Bethlehem of Judah. The purpose of the journey is to escort his wife to their residence in Ephraim. The actions of the Levite in v. 2 come as a surprise, as the Masoretic Text implies that the woman's departure was due to her unfaithfulness, as expressed in the phrase "his concubine played the harlot against him" (NASB). The narrator proceeds to introduce Bethlehem of Judah as the new setting following the Levite's arrival at the woman's house. The narrator depicts the father's delight upon the Levite's arrival. Thus, the narrator establishes a family framework for the subsequent events. These events are characterized by the motives of eating, drinking, and staying overnight. The narrator uses these elements to introduce the theme of hospitality in the story.

Subunit B$_1$′, vv. 26–28, consists of an "simple introverted correspondence":

b$_{1.1}$′ v. 26 | The Levite's wife seeks help from her husband. The woman "came" and "fell down" at the doorway of the house.

b$_{2.1}$′ v. 27a | The Levite's impassibility. He wanted to proceed with his journey.

b$_{2.1}$″ v. 27b | The narrator depicts the woman placed with her hands laying on the threshold of the house.

b$_{1.1}$″ v. 28 | The Levite declines help to his wife and continues his journey towards Ephraim.

Verses 26–28 of the narrative present a contrast to vv. 3–4. Vv. 26–28 depict the dramatic conclusion of the passage. In vv. 3–4, the Levite promptly responded by rising and proceeding to bring her back to his home. In v. 26, the woman seeks help from the Levite. The woman arrives at the house, but the narrator describes her as falling and remaining lying in front of it. The Levite received hos-

pitality from his wife and father-in-law upon arriving at the house in Bethlehem, which contrasts with his indifferent and distant behavior towards his wife. The contrasting behaviors of the father-in-law's hospitality and the Levite's impassibility are obvious. The scene takes place in Bethlehem, specifically at the daughter's father's house. The events from B' take place at the residence of the elderly man in Gibeah.

Therefore, there exists a notable contrast and tension between the two geographical regions. The theme of journey is evident in this subunit, as the Levite seeks to reach Ephraim. Readers are shocked by the Levite's lack of empathy towards his wife. The Levite's initial efforts to win back his wife's affection stand in stark contrast to his current cold demeanor.

Thematic and linguistics correspondences. Both subunits share common terminology. The narrator employs a consistent language that establishes a connection between the two parts. The part of v. 3, "[th]en her husband arose and went after her..." can be paralleled with a similar phrasing found in v. 28: "[t]hen he placed her on the donkey; and the man arose and went to his home." Both units feature verbs that emphasize the Levite's active role. The verbs קוּם "arose" and הלךְ "went" connect the two narrative subunits. The portrayal of the Levite as the protagonist implies his familial authority.

Both subunits share common themes and motives. In both subunits, the house motif is present. In B_1, the house is distinguished by its role in providing hospitality and peace. The repeated use of the word בַּיִת "house" in vv. 26–28 may indicate a hint provided by the narrator. The term בַּיִת is used three times to describe the man's house in Gibeah and once to refer to the house in Ephraim. The frequent use of the word בַּיִת indicates the significance of the house in Gibeah, emphasizing the reader's need to pay careful attention to it. The house should have provided safety for both the woman and the Levite. However, in B_1', the house serves as a place of safety exclusively for the Levite.

The theme of hospitality is present in both subunits. In B_1, the father-in-law of the Levite shows hospitality *par excellence*.[35] The Levite receives "royal" hospitality at the house in Bethlehem. In B_1', the Levite's lack of hospitality towards his wife contrasts with the hospitality he had received earlier.

The journey motif is also evident in both subunits. In B_1, the Levite departs from Ephraim and subsequently reaches Bethlehem. In B_1', the Levite sets out to return to Ephraim. The concept of time is important in plot development. In v. 4b, the narrator states that the Levite consumed food and beverages during his overnight stay at his father-in-law's home. While the Levite experienced a carefree and hospitable night in the house in Bethlehem, his wife, on the other hand, endured a night of terror in Gibeah.[36] The inclusion of three temporal indicators by the narrator, "at daybreak," "until daylight," "in the morning" vv. 26–28, implies that the woman's experience of time was seemingly endless. The woman perceives the morning rays as a source of hope, anticipating that her husband will demonstrate empathy and provide support.[37] However, the Levite refrained from helping her. The Levite once again fails to meet the expectations of both the woman and the readers, leading to disappointment.

The importance for interpretation. The Levite's initial endeavor in the narrative, which is to reunite with his wife in Ephraim, generates significant expectations for the reader. The narrative presents a sequence of events that depart from the expectations established by the narrator in the introduction. In v. 3, the Levite's intention "to

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[35] Jennifer Sanders, "Portrayals of the Unnamed Concubine (Judges 19) in Early Jewish Literature" (M.A. diss., McMaster University, 2004), 18.

[36] For a comprehensive examination of the motif of "Night as Danger," see Weston W. Fields, "The Motif 'Night as Danger' Associated with Three Biblical Destruction Narratives," in *"Sha'arei Talmon": Studies in the Bible, Qumran, and Ancient Near East Presented to Shemaryahu Talmon*, ed. Michael Fishbane, Emanuel Tov and Weston W. Fields, trans. Jon P. Fokkelman (Winona Lake, IN: Eisenbrauns, 1992), 17–32.

[37] Robert H. O'Connell, *The Rhetoric of the Book of Judges* (Leiden: Brill, 1996), 250.

speak tenderly to her" (NASB) implies that the Levite would be accountable for the woman's departure. The LXX^A version, in which the woman expresses anger towards the Levite, aligns coherently with the narrative's plot.[38] Younger and Webb propose that the Levite may be responsible for the offense.[39]

The subunits exhibit distinct characteristics. B_1 features four characters: the Levite, a servant; the Levite's father-in-law; and the Levite's wife. The characters featured in B_1' are the Levite and his wife. B_1 displays significant characteristics, whereas B_1' shows fewer characteristics in contrast. The decrease in character number may suggest the upcoming final scene (A'), where the Levite will be alone.

The narrator highlights a stark contrast between the warm welcome that the Levite received from his father-in-law's house in Bethlehem and the absence of hospitality in Gibeah. There is a tension between the motifs of the house in Bethlehem and the house in Gibeah. It establishes a geographical contrast between Bethlehem and Gibeah. The former area is depicted in positive imagery. The latter region is portrayed using negative imagery.

Bethlehem // Gibeah (B_2 19:5–7 // B_2' 19:22–25). The chiastic structure pair (B_2B_2') to be examined is framed by vv. 5–7 and 22–25.

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[38] The Septuagint (LXXA) presents an alternative translation in comparison to the Masoretic Text. If the Masoretic Text is considered its original form, then the actions of the Levite, such as speaking to her heart and bringing her back home, are not significant in the narrative. In Judg 19:3, the narrator describes "and went after her to woo her and to win her back. The language used and the actions of the Levite in retrieving his concubine support the textual variation suggested by the LXXA, which states: "and his concubine became angry with him, and she went away from him to her father's house…" (Judg 19:2 NETS). Barry G. Webb, *The Book of the Judges: An Integrated Reading* (Sheffield: JSOT, 1987), 188, 261. For further information, see George F. Moore, *Critical and Exegetical Commentary on Judges*, ICC (Edinburgh: T & T Clark, 1918), 408–9.

[39] Younger, *Judges and Ruth*, 375–76. According to Webb, the Levite bears some responsibility for the woman's departure. Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 439.

These divisions are different from Dorsey's, although they are comparable to Fokkelman and Younger's.[40]

Analysis of B_2B_2' as distinct subunits. Verses 5–7 introduce the initial dialogue within the narrative. The Levite's response is conveyed nonverbally. The Levite's tacit response may indicate a decline in his previous authority after his lodging. This subunit introduces the rhetorical figure known as *exergasia*. This rhetorical figure of speech uses parallel lines to create repetitive elements.[41]

Subunit B_2, vv. 5–7, has the following structure:

$b_{2.1}$ v. 5a | The Levite desires to depart.

$b_{2.2}$ v. 5b | First request from the father-in-law. "Sustain yourself with a piece of bread, and afterward you may go."

$b_{2.1}'$ v. 6a | The Levite will not depart.

$b_{2.2}'$ v. 6b | The second request from the in-law's father was to stay through night.

$b_{2.1}''$ v. 7a | The Levite desires to depart for the second time. The second request is denied.

$b_{2.2}''$ v.7b | The persistent third request of the father-in-law. The Levite consents stay.

The repetition of the Levite's desire to depart is evident in members $b_{2.1}$ and $b_{2.1}''$. The motif of the Levite's desire to depart, evident in members $b_{2.1}$ and $b_{2.1}''$, is disrupted by member $b_{2.1}'$. Members $b_{2.2}$, $b_{2.2}'$, and $b_{2.2}''$ reiterate the motif of hospitality through the father's pleas. The narrator emphasizes the Levite's desire to depart, and the excellent hospitality provided by the father-in-law. The day concludes with the father-in-law successfully convincing the Levite to spend the night at his house (v. 7b). The use of this rhetorical figure in B_2 emphasizes the difference in de-

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[40] Fokkelman, "Structural Remarks on Judges 9 and 19," 41; Younger, *Judges and Ruth*, 381; Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 117.

[41] Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, 399.

sires between the Levite, who wishes to leave, and his father-in-law, who wishes to stay.

B_2' commences with the narrator providing a depiction of the inhabitants of Gibeah. The author employs *periphrasis* as a rhetorical figure to emphasize a particular character.[42] The rhetorical figure known as periphrasis is employed when, instead of employing proper names to designate a character, a descriptive phrase or epithet is utilized. The purpose of describing the collective character is to direct readers' attention towards the collective identity of the group and to foreshadow the forthcoming actions of this character within the narrative. The narrator characterizes them as "wicked men" (v. 22a NIV), "a perverse lot" (NRSV), "sons of Belial" (KJV).

The narrator uses *characterismos*—descriptive character portrayal—as a rhetorical device to highlight different character traits.[43] The description provided by the narrator instills pessimistic anticipations regarding the nature of these characters. Readers anticipate that their actions will be devoid of moral considerations. The conclusion of the subunit entails the narrator's depiction of the actions undertaken by the "sons of Belial," a group characterized as morally corrupt individuals. The narrator's initial negative portrayal in v. 22a is ultimately realized by the conclusion of the subunit. Similarly, the subunit B_2', is a "complex introversion correspondence," while the inner members ($b_{2.1.1}$ / / $b_{2.2.2}'$) consist of a simple alternate correspondence.[44]

Subunit B_2', vv. 22–25, has the following structure:

$b_{2.1}$ v. 22a | The narrator characterizes the individuals who arrived at the elderly man's home. "Sons of Belial" (KJV); "Worthless fellows" (NASB).

$b_{2.2}$ vv. 22b–23 | Request and Refusal.

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[42] Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, 419.

[43] Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, 448.

[44] Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, 349, 383.

b$_{2.2.1}$ v.22b | Collective Character's Request. "Bring out the man..."

b$_{2.2.2}$ v. 23 | The elderly man declines the request. Host protects the Levite. Hospitality.

b$_{2.2}$′ vv. 24–25a | Request and Refusal.

b$_{2.2.1}$′ v. 24 | The old man's request. "[H]ere is my virgin daughter and his concubine."

b$_{2.2.2}$′ v. 25a | The group declines the elderly man's request. "X" throws the Levite's wife out. No hospitality.

b$_{2.1}$′ v. 25b | The narrator describes the actions carried out by the group who arrived at the house of the elderly man. "Sexual abuse."

Thematic and linguistics correspondences. Every subunit consists of parallel themes. Verse 6 introduces the theme of joy. The Levite partook in a meal and consumed beverages in the company of his father-in-law. Following the meal, the father-in-law requests the Levite to stay overnight and enjoy himself: "[p]lease be willing to spend the night, and let your heart be merry" (v. 6b). Verse 22a also conveys the theme of happiness. In both subunits, the duration of the celebration is the same. In v. 7b, the narrator states that the Levite complied with his father-in-law's request and stayed overnight. Verse 22 also indicates that the time mentioned is evening, which can be compared to v. 16a. Another parallel motif is the house. The action unfolds in two distinct locations: a house in Bethlehem and another in Gibeah. While both events occur within a house, they happen in separate cities.

Both subunits exhibit contrasting themes. In vv. 5b–6, the Levite's father-in-law makes two requests, illustrating the theme of hospitality. The father-in-law's requests indicate his wish for the Levite to stay in his household. Verse 22b illustrates the absence of hospitality through the presence of the people of Gibeah. The men

of Gibeah make a request that contrasts with the father-in-law's hospitable request (v. 22b).

The perfect example of hospitality is in v. 25b. The hospitality extended to the Levite in Bethlehem stands in stark contrast to the wickedness exhibited by the inhabitants of Gibeah. The narrator emphasizes the differences between the houses in Gibeah and Bethlehem. The tension between the two regions has escalated significantly. The narrator emphasizes the Levite's tacit demeanor in this scene. Thus far, the Levite has been the central focus of the narrative. The Levite is described as proactive. He is responsible for making decisions. He is centrally involved in the events. However, what comes as a surprise is the complete disappearance of the Levite in B_2'. The master of the house in Gibeah offers the Levite's wife as a sacrifice for the Levite's benefit (v. 24). The Levite's silence is inexplicable. He no longer has authority over decisions regarding his wife. He experiences a complete loss of power and authority.

The importance for interpretation. Verses 5–7 and 22–25 provide clarification on the narrative's plot. The role of the Levite as the protagonist in B_2' is significantly diminished. Hence, the central character in the subunit is the elderly man from Gibeah. The hypothesis is supported by the initiative of the elderly man.

The central members of B_2' are $b_{2.2.2}$ and $b_{2.2.2}'$. In member $b_{2.2.2}$, the elder declined the collective character's request to safeguard the Levite. In member $b_{2.2.2}'$, the collective character rejects the request made by the old man. The group does not provide a reason for its rejection. Alternatively, it could be proposed that the collective character's refusal of the offer was influenced by the old man's daughter. The Levite declines to offer protection to the Levite, and the other characters refuse to do so in order to safeguard the Levite's daughter. The main role of the elder in B_2' provides evidence for the claim that the elderly man expelled the Levite's wife from the house.

The members $b_{2.2.2}$ and $b_{2.2.2}'$ center the structural force in B_2'. The narrator highlights the dual aspects of the old man's hospitality. On

one hand, his hospitality is shown through his protection of the Levite. On the other hand, it reveals a shortfall in his hospitality towards Levite's wife.

Bethlehem // Gibeah (B_3 8–10a // B_3′ 15b–21). The chiastic structure pair (B_3B_3′) to be examined is framed by vv. 8–10b and 15–21. We divide vv. 8–10a in accordance with Younger's proposal, but it differs from Fokkelman and Dorsey's. Similarly, the division of vv. 15–21 corresponds with Fokkelman's but differs from Younger and Dorsey's.[45]

The rationale behind this study's B_3 division is topographical. In the first part of v. 10, the action still takes place in Bethlehem, but in the second part of v. 10, it shifts to the area in front of Jabes-Jerusalem. Moreover, the number of characters changes in the second part of v. 10, leaving only the Levite, his wife, and the Levite's servant. The reasoning behind the division of B_3′ is similar to B_3. Verse 15 presents the characters as having arrived at a new location, specifically Gibeah.

Analysis of B3B3′ as distinct subunits. In B_3, the narrator employs the writing technique of "alternate correspondence" in extended form.[46] The members $b_{3.1}$ and $b_{3.1}$′ depict the recurring motif of the Levite's desire to depart. Members $b_{3.2}$ and $b_{3.2}$′ reiterate the father-in-law's desire to say. In B_3, the narrator highlights members $b_{3.3}$ and $b_{3.3}$′. Member $b_{3.3}$ illustrates the Levite's compliance with the father-in-law's request, while member $b_{3.3}$′ demonstrates the Levite's refusal to receive hospitality. The Levite's refusal to accept his father-in-law's hospitality disrupts the theme of hospitality in the narrative ($b_{3.3}$ and $b_{3.3}$′).

Subunit B_3 vv. 8–10a, has the following structure:

$b_{3.1}$ v. 8a | The Levite's desire to depart.

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[45] Fokkelman, "Structural Remarks on Judges 9 and 19," 41, 44; Younger, *Judges and Ruth*, 381; Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 117.

[46] Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, 368.

b$_{3.2}$ v. 8b | The father-in-law makes his initial request.

b$_{3.3}$ v. 8c | The Levite agrees to the initial request.

b$_{3.1}$′ v. 9a | The Levite's desire to depart.

b$_{3.2}$′ v. 9b | The father-in-law makes a second request.

b$_{3.3}$′ v. 10a | The Levite declines the father-in-law's second request.

Verses 8–10b present the second dialogue between the Levite and his father-in-law. The initial conversation between the two individuals proceeded as desired by the father-in-law. The second dialogue exhibits differences compared to the first. B_3 starts with the Levite's intention to depart from his wife's residence. His father-in-law opposes the Levite's desire to embark on the journey, insisting on eating first. The Levite agrees to stay.

Following their meal, the narrator proceeds to depict the departure of the Levite, his wife, and his servant. The Levite's second attempt to depart is met with the father-in-law's second request. The father-in-law desired to spend the night and depart early the following morning for his אֹהֶל "tent" in Ephraim. It is noteworthy that the Levite's father-in-law made a desperate effort to convince him to stay in his house for the fifth evening. This aspect is evident in v. 9.

In previous instances, the father-in-law successfully persuaded him with a brief argument, whereas on this occasion, he employed a more extensive discourse to convince him to remain. B_3 concludes with the Levite's decision to decline the offer of lodging at his father-in-law's home. From v. 4 onward, the Levite's authority diminishes. This decline in authority is evident in the willingness to spend the night at the father-in-law's residence. The Levite regains authority by asserting his independence from his father-in-law's demands. This detail illustrates the Levite's strong determination to depart. V. 10a depicts the Levite in a position of authority.

Subunit B_3′ vv. 15b–21, has the following structure:

b$_{3.1}$ vv. 15b–17a | Narrator's comment: no one wanted to take them into the house.

b$_{3.2}$ v. 17b | The old man's question-suspicion. Where do the Levites and those who were with him? And where are they going?

b$_{3.3}$ vv. 18a | The Levite assures the old man that he is trustworthy man. He is going to the "The House of the God."

b$_{3.4}$ v. 18b | "[N]o man will take me into his house"

b$_{3.3}$′ v. 19 | The Levite assures the old man that he has everything he needs. "We have fodder," and "we have bread and wine."

b$_{3.2}$′ v. 20 | The old man's positive response. He welcomes them into his house.

b$_{3.1}$′ v. 21 | Narrator's comment: Someone was found to accommodate them. The old man feeds the animals. He washes the guests' feet. He gives them food.

Subunit B_3′ exhibits an "introverted correspondence."[47] Verses 15–21 are complementary to vv. 8–10b. The end of B_3 is marked by the Levite's journey to Ephraim. B_3′ restores the Levite's prolonged stay. This subunit conveys the notion of a sense of control and presents the argument that the Levite's choice to remain in Gibeah was favorable. Upon reaching the square of Gibeah, the Levite seeks refuge and accommodation. At this juncture, the narrator proceeds to introduce a new setting known as Gibeah. The tension is established by the narrator who asserts that there was no one available to extend a welcome for an overnight stay (v. 15b). The narrator introduces a character who is identified as an elderly man hailing from the same geographical region as the Levite.

[47] Bullinger, *Figures of Speech*, 374.

After the introductory section, the elderly man poses his question. The Levite answers the elderly man's inquiry. In addition to providing a response to the inquiry, the Levite endeavors to convey to the elderly man that he possesses all the necessary resources. The elderly man had no potential losses to incur as a result of accommodating these individuals. The Levite successfully persuades the elderly man to grant them lodging within his house. The elderly man provides sustenance to the donkeys. The host proceeds to cleanse the feet of his visitors, after which they partake in a communal meal and beverage consumption. We attribute the subunit's end to the same factors as B_2, specifically the need for sustenance through food and drink. Currently, the Levite's choice to depart from his father-in-law's residence appears to have been advantageous.

Thematic and linguistics correspondences. Both subunits exhibit both shared and divergent themes. The theme of hospitality is present in both subunits. In B_3, the elderly man symbolizes the hospitable nature of the household in Bethlehem. In both subunits, the house motif is present. The function of food and drink is evident in both subunits. The second theme explores the contrast of accepting and rejecting hospitality. In B_3, upon the initial request from the father-in-law, the Levite consents to remain and dine with his father-in-law. The Levite's rejection of the father-in-law's second request stands in contrast to his acceptance of the first two requests. As a result, the Levite declines to stay overnight and departs from the residence in Bethlehem to Ephraim.

B_3 highlights the tension between the acceptance and rejection of hospitality. The rationale for accepting hospitality is reiterated within this section. Following the Levite's speech, the elder of Ephraim agrees to offer them accommodation. In B_3', the narrator highlights the absence of anyone willing to offer the Levite hospitality, marking a stark contrast to B_3, where the father-in-law persistently urged the Levite to stay. This juxtaposition underscores the thematic shift in the narrative from the abundance of offered hospitality to its complete withdrawal. However, in B_3', following the

narrative structure, the Levite actively seeks hospitality ($b_{3.4}$). This subunit introduces a motive for despair, creating a contrast with the earlier justification for rejecting hospitality.

The linguistic richness of the two subunits is limited. In v. 9, the father-in-law of the Levite warns him: "spend the night here [Bethlehem] that your heart may be merry." Within v. 20, the elder warns the Levite: "do not spend the night in the open square". The Hebrew verb לִין *spend the night*; *stay overnight* serves as the connecting member between the two subunits. The verb appears in v. 9 and v. 20. The negative form of the verb is observed in v. 20, specifically as אַל־תָּלֶן, which can be translated "don't spend the night" or "don't stay overnight."[48]

Ultimately, both verses convey the same essential idea: the Levite's need to find lodging for the night. Notably, v. 20 represents the final instance in which the narrator explicitly or implicitly conveys the notion that spending the night without proper accommodation poses a risk. The narrator includes this detail to evoke a sense of suspense in the reader's mind.

The importance for interpretation. Webb states that v. 3 introduces the term לֵב "heart" initially, and by v. 9, it recurs five times. Verse 3 introduces the word לֵב to promote reconciliation. The Levite expressed his intention to return his wife to Ephraim. The Levite's father-in-law employs the concept of לֵב as a persuasive tactic to encourage the Levite to prolong his stay in his company for a few additional days. The term is reiterated in each of the father-in-law's requests.[49] Ultimately, the father-in-law's display of hospitality towards the Levite served a more profound objective: fostering reconciliation between Levite and his wife. The narrator conveys to the reader the Levite's intention to speak to his wife's heart, but nowhere in the narrative does this speaking of the heart occur. The narrator further illustrates the juxtaposition between the Levite and

[48] *HALOT*, s.v. "לין."

[49] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 443.

his father-in-law. We can interpret the Levite's departure from the Bethlehem household as an indication that the anticipated reconciliation between the Levite and his wife, as mentioned in v. 3, has not materialized.

Another relevant point regarding the father-in-law's proposal in v. 9 is the clarification provided by the woman's father. He states that the Levite should depart early the next day and return to his own dwelling, referred to as a "tent" in Hebrew. The term אֹהֶל "tent" stands in opposition to the term בַּיִת "house." The father-in-law's statement regarding the Levite's return to the tent implies a notable distinction between residing in the house of Ephraim and residing in Bethlehem. This detail could potentially indicate one of the underlying factors that influenced the woman's decision to depart from the "tent" of the Levite within her father's "house" (v. 2).[50]

There is no "House" in Jabes-Jerusalem (C. vv. 10b–14)

The division of vv. 10b–14 defines the central axis of the chiastic-topographical structure. This literary unit diverges from those proposed by Fokkelman, Younger, and Dorsey, with its division primarily based on topographical aspects.[51] Verses 10b–14 depict the potential movement of the three characters toward Jabes-Jerusalem, but ultimately, they head toward Gibeah. Another factor contributing to this division is that, for the first time in the narrative, the Levite, his wife, and the servant are together without the presence of any other characters.

A unique unit. The main part of the narrative in Judg 19 is comprised of vv. 10b–14. Unit C represents the pivotal moment in the

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[50] Webb, *The Book of Judges*, 443.

[51] Fokkelman, "Structural Remarks on Judges 9 and 19," 41; Younger, *Judges and Ruth*, 381; Dorsey, *Literary Structure*, 117.

narrative's plot. C is a "complex introversion correspondence," whereas the inner member (c_3) consists of an introverted correspondence.

Unit C, vv. 10b–14, has the following structure:

c_1 vv. 10b – 11a | The characters proceeded towards Jerusalem. "[T]he day was almost gone."

c_2 v. 11b | The servant's proposal: Jerusalem as a place of shelter.

c_3 v. 12 | Rejection of the Levite-rejection of Jerusalem.

$c_{3.1}$ v. 12a | The Levite rejects the servant's proposal.

$c_{3.2}$ v. 12b | Reason for rejecting the Jabes: "…are not of the sons of Israel."

$c_{3.1}'$ v.12c | The Levite proposes to go to Gibeah.

c_2' v. 13 | The Levite's proposal: Gibeah or Ramah as a place of refuge.

c_1' v. 14 | The characters proceeded towards Gibeah. "[T]he sun set."

Unit C provides information regarding the forthcoming accommodation arrangements for travelers, specifying that Jerusalem has been designated as the subsequent destination where they will be lodging for the night. The perception is influenced by the utterance of the servant, who suggests, "[p]lease come, and let us turn aside into this city of Jebusites and spend the night in it" (v. 11). The notion that Jerusalem would serve as the settlement is negated by the intervention of the Levite, who states, "we will not turn aside into the city of foreigners who are not of the sons of Israel" (v. 12a). Currently, the reader's mind experiences a state of perplexity. If Jerusalem is deemed unsuitable, an alternative location for the characters to spend the night would need to be determined. The Levite answers these questions by asserting that the residents of Jerusalem are not of Israelite descent (v. 12b).

Furthermore, the Levite proposes Gibeah as the solution. The Levite's servant and wife, as well as the readers, seem convinced by the Levite's arguments. Jerusalem cannot be considered a viable solution since its inhabitants do not possess a heritage dating back to the ancient Israelite community. Gibeah appears to offer a favorable solution for weary travelers. As a result, the narrator establishes a contextual framework for the upcoming events that will occur in this region.

Thematic and linguistics correspondences with ABB'A'. This unit explores recurring themes in the narrative. Especially the authority's motive. The Levite declines his servant's plea to stay in Jerusalem. The narrative portrays the Levite as the family leader. The Levite's refusal of his father-in-law's proposal in B_3 can be attributed to the same underlying rationale. In the B_2B_3 and $B_2'B_3'$ units, the Levite's authority is overshadowed by the authority of his father-in-law and the elderly man in Gibeah.

However, in C the Levite assumes authority as the head of the family and decides on behalf of the entire group. Readers are encouraged to critically evaluate the ethical soundness of the Levite's decision. In the narrative, the Levite presents a counterargument to another character's proposal by offering an alternative suggestion. The proposal suggests going to Gibeah. In this context, there is a notable tension between Jabes-Jerusalem and Gibeah. This unit also addresses the theme of the journey. This unit's journey is the second in chronological order.

The importance for interpretation. The literary unit's center possesses distinct and unique features in comparison to the other units. The uniqueness of the scene is demonstrated by the introduction of a new region, Jebus-Jerusalem. Only once in the narrative is a location specified (Jebus), and the travelers do not stop there. In the units preceding and following the center of the structure, there are designated locations where travelers tend to have an extended duration of stay. Notice that the Levite, his servant, and his wife meet for the first time. Occasionally, the woman's father or the

elderly man of Gibeah's household accompany these three characters. Additionally, a notable feature of this unit is the animation of the Levite's servant. The conversation between the servant and the Levite plays a crucial role in the subsequent events of this unit.

The narrator recounts a distinct moment when they were unsure regarding their accommodation choice. As night approached, the Levite faced the dilemma of choosing a destination. The dialogue between the Levite and the servant demonstrates their strong bond. The servant's proposal to the Levite would have been the best option at the narrative's conclusion.

The Levite suggests Gibeah as an alternative to the servant's proposal. Member c_2, located in the center of unit C, describes the Levite's rejection of the servant's proposal and his explanation for why Jerusalem was not a viable choice. Because the Jebusites were not of Jewish descent, the Levite declined the servant's proposal. The Jabes-Jerusalemites are not considered part of the children of Israel due to their failure to comply with God's command to completely remove them from the land. This failure establishes the framework for Israel's future.

The Implication of the Chiastic-Topographic Structure in Judges 19

The narrator employs a distinctive narrative technique in Judg 19, assigning names to geographical regions rather than providing specific names for the characters involved. Judges 19 foreshadows the conflict between the Saul dynasty and the David dynasty. We propose that the narrator of Judg 19 crafts the narrative to present a critical depiction of Saul while simultaneously casting David in a favorable light, ultimately foreshadowing the rise of the Davidic dynasty.[52]

[52] Amit suggests that Judg 19 is about a "hidden polemic against Saul and his admirers." Yaira Amit, *Hidden Polemics in Biblical Narrative* (Leiden: Brill, 2000), 178.

Hill Country of Ephraim

Pair AA′ represents Hill Country of Ephraim. Mount Ephraim is the birthplace of Samuel (1 Sam 1:1). Samuel served as Israel's final judge prior to the establishment of Saul as the first king and the subsequent election of David as the second king. Samuel anointed both of Israel's kings. In 1 Sam 16:1, Samuel expresses sorrow as a result of God's rejection of Saul. At the same time, God informs Samuel of his decision to appoint David as king of Israel. The narrator's reference to this mountain is significant because it designates Samuel as the individual responsible for selecting David's lineage. Judges 19 not only portrays the conflict between Saul and David but also foreshadows the significance of Samuel in the historical narrative of the Israelite nation. The strategic positioning of Mount Ephraim in both the introduction and conclusion of the narrative implies that Samuel plays a pivotal role in shaping the historical trajectory of the Israelite community.

Bethlehem of Judah // Gibeah

The tension between Bethlehem of Judah and Gibeah is evident in the pairs BB′. Throughout the narrative, the primary settings in which the events unfold are Bethlehem and Gibeah. Bethlehem of Judah is significant in the OT because of its association with David's birthplace (1 Sam 16:1, 13). David's residence is in Bethlehem. There, he received his anointment as king of Israel from Samuel. In juxtaposition to Bethlehem, Gibeah served as the birthplace of Saul (1 Sam 10:26). Gibeah serves as both Saul's residence and Israel's first king's capital city.

The narrative of Judg 19 establishes a striking contrast between Bethlehem in Judah and Gibeah, presenting these locations as representative of opposing moral and social paradigms. Bethlehem is characterized as a place of hospitality and generosity, while Gibeah is portrayed in a profoundly negative light, marked by its stark inhospitable nature. The narrator emphasizes Gibeah's moral corrup-

tion through the actions of the "sons of Belial," whose collective depravity serves to underscore the broader thematic and ethical critique embedded in the text.

At the end of the episode, readers will select Bethlehem as their preferred accommodation destination. The House of David provides protection for the people of Israel. Simultaneously, the narrator expresses his disapproval of Saul by depicting the city of Gibeah in a negative light.

Jabes-Jerusalem

The central focus of the topographical structure is the narrator's presentation of Jabes-Jerusalem as a key component within the narrative. In C, Jabes-Jerusalem is portrayed as being rejected by the Levite. The narrator's identification of Jabes as Jerusalem could potentially serve as a veiled indication of a pro-Davidic sentiment. The narrative's shift from Bethlehem to Jerusalem prompts the reader to think about the figure of David. We anticipate that David, the future king of Israel, will defeat Jerusalem militarily and establish it as the nation's capital. The Levite similarly declines Ramah. Ramah serves as the historical dwelling place of the esteemed biblical figure, the prophet Samuel. Samuel transferred the monarchy from Saul to David.[53]

In the narrative, the servant's voice appears to have served as a voice of salvation. The voice of preservation may also be interpreted as the divine voice favoring the selection of the house of David over the house of Saul, and the preference of Jerusalem over Gibeah. In this regard, 2 Sam 3:1 highlights a conflict between the factions led by Saul and David. The physical powers of David were

[53] Brettler points out: "The city of Gibeah was Saul's birthplace and home (1 Sam 10:26; cf. the name („Gibeah of Saul"; in contrast, Ramah and Jerusalem are the homes of the „good guys" — Samuel (1 Sam 1:1; 25:1; and elsewhere) and the Davidic monarchy." Marc Z. Brettler, "The book of Judges: Literature as Politics," *JBL* 108.3 (1989): 395–418.

increasing, while the power and influence of the house of Saul were diminishing. Judges 19 codifies the house motif as a theme. The recurring motif is evident throughout the entirety of the narrative. The house of the Levite's father-in-law is in Bethlehem, the house of the elderly man is in Gibeah, and the Levite's home is in Ephraim. We propose that the word בַּיִת "house" connotes the royal lineage. The biblical references to the בית דָּוִד "house of David" and בית שָׁאוּל "house of Saul" in 2 Sam 3:1 serve as indicators of regal lineage. Considering the aforementioned information, it can be observed that the residence of the father-in-law in Bethlehem of Judah and the dwelling of the elderly man in Gibeah exhibit a sense of expectation towards the prospective lineages of both David and Saul, which are anticipated to serve as future dynasties for the nation of Israel.[54]

The structure in Judg 19 exhibits a chiastic-topographical arrangement that conveys a coded message using different regions. The narrator's portrayal of Bethlehem in a positive light, as well as the emphasis on Jabes-Jerusalem's central role in the narrative, reflects the narrator's pro-David stance and simultaneous anti-Saul sentiment. This topographical structure foreshadows and elucidates the forthcoming successions of two dynasties, with Israel's Davidic dynasty being the rightful one.

Conclusion

We showcased the narrator's skill in crafting the storyline to effectively convey their distinct perspective on the monarchy dilemma. First, the author employs the literary device of introverted correspondence to convey the intended meaning of the tale. We examined the parallel units that comprise the rhetorical structure, which were facilitated by the implementation of this literary device.

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[54] To acquire further details regarding the conflict between the house of Saul and the house of David, see Amit, *Hidden Polemics*, 169–88.

These units provide a comprehensive analysis of the stories, examining both complementary and contrasting units. As a result, a thorough examination of the plot and its internal structure increases the likelihood of revealing the significance of this specific episode.

In addition to employing introverted correspondence, the narrator utilizes various other techniques to construct an engaging plot. Some of these techniques are simple alternation correspondence, simple introverted correspondence, *exergasia*, *periphrasis*, *characterismos*, complex introversion correspondence, extended alternation, and most importantly, the chiastic-topographic structure technique that this paper talks about, which predicts the monarchical dilemma.

Secondly, we propose that the Judg 19 narrative primarily explores the theme of home. The theme in question is present in four out of the five units, except C. Notably, the absence of the house theme in C, which holds a central position within the overall structure, serves to accentuate the prominence of the house theme in all the other units. The house motif assumes symbolic significance for Israel's initial two ruling lineages, Saul and David.

Furthermore, the proposed topographical structure reflects the narrator's pro-David viewpoint and harsh attitude toward Saul. Therefore, the study's results suggest that the narrator's primary goal in this narrative was to emphasize Israel's urgent need for a king, and then assert that David's royal lineage will fill this void. The narrative in Judg 19 foreshadows the complex predicament that arises between Saul and David within the context of the monarchy.

Appendix

5.1 Judges 19:1–30 | Chiastic-Topographical Structure

A. Vv. 1–2 | Mount of Ephraim
  B. Vv. 3–10a | Bethlehem
    B_1 vv. 3–4 | Bethlehem of Judah
    B_2 vv. 5–7 | Bethlehem of Judah
    B_3 vv. 8–10a | Bethlehem of Judah
      C. Vv. 10b–14 | Jabes-Jerusalem
  B′. Vv. 15–28 | Gibeah
    B_1′ vv. 15–21 | Gibeah
    B_2′ vv. 22–25 | Gibeah
    B_3′ vv. 26–28 | Gibeah
A′. Vv. 29–30 | Mount of Ephraim

A Detailed Structure of Judges 19:1–30

A. Vv. 1–2 | Mount of Ephraim
  a_1 v. 1a | There was no king in Israel.
    a_2 v. 1b | The Levite וַיִּקַּח "took" a concubine from Bethlehem in Ephraim.
      a_3 v. 2a | Problem: "his concubine played the harlot against him" (NASB)
        || "his concubine became angry with him" (NETS).
    a_2′ v. 2b | The concubine וַתֵּלֶךְ "went away" from him to her father's house in Bethlehem.
  a_1′ v. 2c | The concubine stayed in Bethlehem for four months.

B. Vv. 3–10a | Bethlehem

  B_1 vv. 3–4 | Bethlehem of Judah
    $b_{1.1}$ v. 3a | The Levite desires to persuade his wife to return to the house of Ephraim. The Levite "arose," and "went after her."
      $b_{2.1}$ v. 3b | Hospitality: the woman leads him to her father's home.
      $b_{2.1}$′ v. 3c | Hospitality: the women's father warmly welcomes Levi to his house.
    $b_{1.1}$′ v. 4 | The father of the daughter persuades the Levite to remain in Bethlehem for an extended period of three days.

B_2 vv. 5–7 | Bethlehem of Judah

$b_{2.1}$ v. 5a | The Levite desires to depart.

$b_{2.2}$ v. 5b | First request from the father-in-law. "Sustain yourself with a piece of bread, and afterward you may go."

$b_{2.1}'$ v. 6a | The Levite will not depart.

$b_{2.2}'$ v. 6b | The second request from the in-law's father was to stay through night.

$b_{2.1}''$ v. 7a | The Levite desires to depart for the second time. The second request is denied.

$b_{2.2}''$ v.7b | The persistent third request of the father-in-law. The Levite consents stay.

B_3 vv. 8–10a | Bethlehem of Judah

$b_{3.1}$ v. 8a | The Levite's desire to depart.

$b_{3.2}$ v. 8b | The father-in-law makes his initial request.

$b_{3.3}$ v. 8c | The Levite agrees to the initial request.

$b_{3.1}'$ v. 9a | The Levite's desire to depart.

$b_{3.2}'$ v. 9b | The father-in-law makes a second request.

$b_{3.3}'$ v. 10a | The Levite declines the father-in-law's second request.

C. Vv. 10b–13 | Jabes-Jerusalem

c_1 vv. 10b–11a | The characters proceeded towards Jerusalem. "[T]he day was almost gone."

c_2 v. 11b | The servant's proposal: Jerusalem as a place of shelter.

c_3 v. 12 | Rejection of the Levite-rejection of Jerusalem.

$c_{3.1}$ v. 12a | The Levite rejects the servant's proposal.

$c_{3.2}$ v. 12b | Reason for rejecting the Jabes: "…are not of the sons of Israel."

$c_{3.1}'$ v.12c | The Levite proposes to go to Gibeah.

c_2' v. 13 | The Levite's proposal— Gibeah or Ramah as a place of refuge.

c_1' v. 14 | The characters proceeded towards Gibeah. "[T]he sun set."

B′. Vv. 14–28 | Gibeah

B_1' vv. 15–21 | Gibeah

$b_{1.1}'$ v. 26 | The Levite's wife seeks help from her husband. The woman "came" and "fell down" at the doorway of the house.

$b_{2.1}'$ v. 27a | The Levite's impassibility. He wanted to proceed with

his journey.

b$_{2.1}$″ v. 27b | The narrator depicts the woman placed with her hands laying on the threshold of the house.

b$_{1.1}$″ v. 28 | The Levite declines help to his wife and continues his journey towards Ephraim.

B$_2$′ *vv. 22–25* | Gibeah

b$_{2.1}$ v. 22a | The narrator characterizes the individuals who arrived at the elderly man's home. "Sons of Belial" (KJV); "Worthless fellows" (NASB).

b$_{2.2}$ vv. 22b–23 | Request and Refusal.

b$_{2.2.1}$ v.22b | Collective Character's Request. "Bring out the man..."

b$_{2.2.2}$ v. 23 | The elderly man declines the request. Host protects Levite. Hospitality.

b$_{2.2}$′ vv. 24–25a | Request and Refusal.

b$_{2.2.1}$′ v. 24 | The old man's request. "[H]ere is my virgin daughter and his concubine."

b$_{2.2.2}$′ v. 25a | The group declines the elderly man's request. "X" throws Levite's wife out. No hospitality.

b$_{2.1}$′ v. 25b | The narrator describes the actions carried out by the group who arrived at the house of the elderly man. "Sexual abuse."

B$_3$′ *vv. 26–28* | Gibeah

b$_{3.1}$ vv. 15b–17a | Narrator's comment: no one wanted to take them into the house.

b$_{3.2}$ v. 17b | The old man's question-suspicion. Where do the Levites and those who were with him? And where are they going?

b$_{3.3}$ v. 18a | The Levite assures the old man that he is trustworthy man. He is going to the "The House of the God."

b$_{3.4}$ v. 18b | "[N]o man will take me into his house"

b$_{3.3}$′ v. 19 | The Levite assures the old man that he has everything he needs. "We have fodder," and "we have bread and wine."

b$_{3.2}$′ v. 20 | The old man's positive response. He welcomes them into his house.

b$_{3.1}$′ v. 21 | Narrator's comment: Someone was found to accommodate them. The old man feeds the animals. He washes the guests. He gives them food.

A′. Vv. 29–30 | Mount of Ephraim

a$_1$ v. 29a | "He [the Levite] entered in his house" from Ephraim.

a$_2$ v. 29b | The action of the Levite. The Levite "took a knife," "laid hold of his concubine," "and cut her in twelve pieces…"

a$_1$**′** v. 29c | The Levite "sent her throughout the territory of Israel."

a$_2$**′** v. 30 | The reaction of the tribes of Israel. "Consider it," "take counsel," and "speak up."